

GRANTEE MONITORING

Grantee Name	Pregnancy Options LifeCare Center
Location/Address	18 2 nd Street NW Faribault MN 55021
Date and Location of Site Visit	August 8, 2017 at the Center
Grantee Participants	Gina Little, Executive Director; Tammy Eiler, Program Coordinator
MDH Participant(s)	Mary Ottman, Grant Manager
Grant Agreement #/PO #	#109535

PURPOSE:

In accordance with the MDH Policy 238.01 Grantee Monitoring, MDH will conduct at least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000, and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

The purpose of the grant monitoring visit is to review and ensure progress against the grants' goals, to address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period and to build rapport between the state agency and the grantees. This visit may cover topics such as statutory compliance; challenges faced by the grantee, modifications made to the grant program, program outcomes, grantee policies and procedures, grantee governance, and training and technical assistance needs.

The findings or information obtained through this monitoring activity will be used:

- To ascertain how MDH program funds are being utilized
- To provide targeted technical assistance needs
- To improve program implementation performance
- To suggest other training needs
- In future funding decisions

OVERVIEW

1. Is the Grantee's non-profit 501(c) 3 status current? [Yes](#)
2. Does the Grantee have a central file containing the official records for this grant agreement and/or amendment? [Yes](#)

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3. Where is this central file located?

Executive Director's Office

4. Who is responsible for this central file?

Gina Little, Executive Director

5. Does the central file include

- The grant proposal? *Yes*
- The award letter? *Yes*
- The signed grant agreement and any/all amendments? *Yes*
- Any/all requests and/or approvals for scope/budget changes? *Yes*
- The work plan? *Yes*
- Any/all payment requests (invoices)? *Yes*
- Any/all signed subcontracts? Not applicable (no subcontracts) *N/A*
- Any/all Progress Reports? *Yes*

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Does the organization meet all reporting requirements as outlined in the grant agreement and/or amendment?

Yes

2. Are expenditure reports submitted timely and accurately?

Yes

3. Are progress reports submitted with all required information and in a timely manner?

Yes

CONTRACTUAL

1. Does the Grantee have written policies or procedures addressing use of contractors and/or subcontractors?

Yes

2. Were any sub-contractors paid from the MDH grant required to sign a contractual agreement outlining services to be rendered, duration of engagement, and pay rate?

Yes

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3. Was the contractual agreement(s) reviewed and approved by MDH before implementation?

N/A

PERSONNEL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE GRANTEE

1. Are time distribution records (e.g., time-sheets) maintained to show how employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind to, the MDH grant and who work on multiple projects/programs spend their time?

Yes

2. Do personnel and/or payroll records show dates of hire/termination, immigration status if applicable, actual hours of time worked, leave time, federal and state programs worked on, and earning for all employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind, to the MDH grant?

Yes

3. Does the Grantee have policies and procedures in writing regarding:

- Payroll? Yes
- Travel? Yes
- Overtime? Yes
- Timesheets? Yes
- Taxes? Yes
- Purchasing? Yes
- Compensated time off? Yes

4. Are employees time sheets approved? Yes

By whom (what position)? Executive Director

By the Executive Director? Yes

5. Does the Grantee's payroll preparation and distribution involve more than one employee? Yes

6. Does an authorized official approve all checks before being signed? Yes

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Additional Comments:

Pregnancy Options has been a long time PA grantee and has a good system set up for their accounting and business procedures.

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PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

Please use this space to answer all questions.

Program History

- When was your program started? Why was it started? *Pregnancy Options started in 1986 under another name. We received our first grant in 2008.*
- What need does your program fulfill? *We provide a safe place for women to come when faced with an unplanned pregnancy to receive life-affirming information and education. We provide supportive services with life coaching to assist women in being empowered to make healthy life sustaining choices.*
- How has the program grown or changed since its beginning? *We have incorporated life-coaching in to all our programming to assist women in moving forward in making healthy life empowering decisions. We have broken our programming into components—New Beginnings (Pregnancy to 6 weeks), Bridging (6 weeks to 12 months).*

Grantee's Target population

- Who does the organization primarily serve? *We serve primarily at risk pregnant mothers and mothers with infants.*
- What is the program's demographic and geographic coverage? *We serve a diverse population of Caucasian, Hispanic, and Somali, serving Faribault, Kenyon, Waterville, Kilkenny, Northfield, Dundas, Nerstrand, and Owatonna.*
- Review recent Demographic reporting. *Recent Demographic reporting was discussed. Numbers for this grantee seem to be stable.*

Leadership and Governance

- Effective Board: How many board members currently serve, who are they? *6 members with current recruitment happening to add up to 4 additional members. Steve McDonough is our Board President, Kay Keller is our Vice President, Kris Nyhus is our Treasurer, Lynn Nyhus is the Secretary, Joe Miller, and Donna Reuvers.*
- How often do they meet? How are they informed of organization's progress and challenges? *They meet every month and receive a report from the Executive Director monthly on the progress and challenges and more frequently as needed.*
- How supportive is the Board of the program? *They recognize without this program we would not be able to touch the number of lives we do educating them in safety and best practices to become the best parent they can be.*

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- How is the program staffed? Who is responsible for the supervision of grant staff? *We have a Client Service Coordinator and one Client Advocate with the Executive Director assisting as needed. The Client Service Coordinator supervises the Client Advocate and the Executive Director supervises the Client Service Coordinator.*
 - How are staff evaluated on their performance? How long have PA staff been employed there? *Yearly - we do an evaluation which has a mutual format where they review themselves and I evaluate using the same format. We then meet and discuss strategies for moving forward. The Client Service Coordinator, Tammy Eiler has been with us two years and the Client Advocate, Anahi Cisneros has been with us for 3 years.*
 - How are staff background checks done? *Using on-line services and the BCA.*
 - What is your organization's policy on complaints for staff and clients? *Upon a complaint we ask for a written statement of the situation. It then comes to the Executive Director. It is investigated and the ED speaks with the Board President and the situation is discussed with the staff person named. Results are determined upon the situation. If the ED is named, then it goes directly to the Board President. Follow-up letter is sent to the individual issuing the complaint.*

Budget

- Does the current budget reflect your work plan activities? *Yes*
- Is the budget accurate for the project size/scope? *Yes*
- Do you have any challenges with the budget or invoicing? *We received a large donation of diapers last year which resulted in us not spending all our supply dollars.*
- Has your Financial Reconciliation taken place? *Yes*
- If you have an elevated risk designation, and/ or your Financial Reconciliation report cited any concerns, these will be discussed.

Review Work Plan including:

Partners

- If applicable: how are people referred to the program? Are there any barriers encountered with referral sources? What is your most common referral source? *Public Health, Social Services, District One Hospital, Mayo Health Systems, Allina Clinic, Word of mouth. As we have stabilized our program and center the barriers have lessened. We do continue to hear that people don't know we are here. We are working on meeting service clubs, churches and have reworked our flyers.*
- Challenges with partners or specific counties? *The issue for clients to get insurance*

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continues to be a problem in Rice County. Other counties around us are able to get insurance on infants rather quickly. For example, a mother gave birth in October 2016 and the infant didn't have insurance until after April 1st.

Work Plan

- Review your 2016 – 19 grant application's description of the program you are asking to be funded. On your work plan note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.
- **Prepare a short summary of your current program(s) and the number of clients being served.** How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing? Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed? Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased since June 2016? Is there anything in particular you want to share about your current program to explain its current status?

Summary for Site Visit

Pregnancy Options Earn While You Learn program continues to gain clients. We are currently serving approximately 100 women a month. These women come from a diverse population including but not limited to Latino/Hispanic, Somalian and Caucasian. The breakdown is about a third for each population. Our numbers are flexible depending on the weather as most of our Somali population walks to the center and if weather is bad they do not come. We continue to strive to meet the goals of our application on a monthly basis. We are working diligently to meet our goals and outreaching to the community. Life Coaching has had a positive impact on a number of our women. Some have returned to complete high school, attend community college classes, begin mental health services, move from unhealthy environments, and to gain confidence in being a mother. Communication continues to raise concerns. The language difference is often reflected in how a woman understands what is being taught. We have become very creative with a "picture tool" for understanding what women need when they come into our center and language is a barrier. This has had a positive reaction from clients. We have also worked at integrating a life coaching mechanism in all we do so we maintain a "program" feel and less of a "charity". Women are sharing they feel joy coming to our center and learning updated information and support. Women are finding our center to be a "safe place" to share what is happening in their lives and home, hearing and working towards positive outcomes for each situation with a non-judgement coming from staff. It has been a remarkable year of growth and stabilization. We are in a good place as we move into this next year. The impact we make in lives and our community does not have a price tag, it is priceless and impactful. We have a former client who now feels empowered to join an advisory team for a local social service agency and is impacting our community in a positive way.

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We continue to maintain what we have established and stabilized. Our numbers this summer are a bit lower than we have seen but not by many.

- Do you anticipate making any changes to the 2017-18 Work Plan? If so, in what way and for what reasons?

We do not plan on making any changes at this time.

Participants:

- What type of outreach does the organization put into action? What is working well? What are more the challenging aspects to finding or retaining clients?

We have new flyers we are putting out with business cards attached for people to take as they need and have our number with them. Speaking to people and building a sense of trust is working well. We have started texting client reminders of their appointments and that seems to be helping with retention. Building relationship with the client seems to assist in them continuing to come to our center and learn.

Data:

- How is program data collected and by whom? Is data collected useful to agency?
Data is collected by Client Service staff and placed in EKYROS. This helps us determine who we serve, how often, what services provided and outcomes.
- Anything we can do to help or simplify data collection?

Review Evaluation

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Report Summary will be discussed (If you were a past grantee).
- Your 2016-17 Evaluation Plan will be reviewed. Any suggestions provided in your 2015-16 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing a similar evaluation. If you are planning a new evaluation, details will be discussed. Do you have any questions on your evaluation? *The Year 1 evaluation project included a review of their shaken baby program. This unique program and evaluation was interesting to review and discuss. The staff will be sharing their program and evaluation highlights at the next grantee meeting in October.*

Miscellaneous

- Anything else you would like to share?
- Anything else we haven't asked?

What can we do to help?

- Trainings and Grantee meetings useful for grantee? Any topic suggestions?
- Feedback or suggestions for the state?

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- Is there any way MDH can assist you to better equip your success in the Positive Alternatives Grant Program?

Summary:

Pregnancy Options (PO) has been a Positive Alternatives (PA) grantee since 2008. They serve a rural area with several counties southeast of the Twin Cities. The area has attracted a diverse community of people and PO has had the opportunity to more recently serve an ever increasing diverse number of clients. This has created challenges along with much opportunity including language barriers and changes to curriculum better geared for specific cultures. The staff have continued to rise to the new challenges and work to meet the growing needs of the community. Programs that PO offers the community through the work funded by the PA grant includes: case management, pregnancy testing, mentoring and life coaching, and pregnancy and parenting education.

Staff have divided their parenting education into two components: *New Beginnings* for clients from pregnancy to having infants up to 6 weeks of age and *Bridging* –clients with infants from 6 weeks to one year of age. Life coaching is a relatively new aspect of their mentoring program and has been well received by both clients and the community. Many favorable comments have been received from recent clients. Lives are being challenged and changed.

Outreach is accomplished by staff making contact with possible local partners and leaving promotional pamphlets and other literature for future referrals. The goal would be to organize a community base of warm referrals to offer the best possible services available community wide for all clients.

One recent challenge the staff have encountered involves getting insurance coverage for clients and their infants through Rice county. Clients from other neighboring counties have not experienced this same issue. Staff continue to look into this situation and work to get it resolved for those clients in need of immediate insurance coverage.

PO has worked to make their Center open, warm and inviting. They are located in the heart of the city of Faribault with ample parking and in a highly visible location. The staff have worked hard to meet the needs of the community by expanding the educational components they are offering to their clients and expanding curriculum to meet the needs of their growing diverse client base. Offering curriculum for non-English speaking clients and having advocates available that can communicate is the continuing challenge and opportunity staff hope to address.

This grantee has responsibly used their PA funding to encourage and assist women who are pregnant to carry their babies to term. They have diligently managed their programming and funding in accordance with their grant agreement. I look forward to our continuing partnership with their funding provided by the Positive Alternatives Grant Program.

Date: September 22, 2017

Grant Manager: Mary Ottman

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